



H.R. 1907 – Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program Act

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 1907 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Jim Saxton (R-NJ) on April 18, 2007. The Committee on Natural Resources ordered the bill to be reported, as amended, by voice vote on June 25, 2008.

H.R. 1907 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 22, 2008.

SUMMARY

Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program: H.R. 1907 directs the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to establish a program to protect land near coastal areas and estuaries. Under the program, NOAA would make competitive grants to coastal states that wish to purchase eligible lands or other property interests. Grant awards will be based on demonstrated need for protection, and the ability to leverage funds from Federal, regional, State, and other sources. Lands may only be purchased through this program from willing sellers. Federal grant funds must be matched at 100 percent, unless this requirement is waived by the Secretary of Interior.

The bill authorizes the appropriation of \$60 million for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013.

BACKGROUND

Many coastal areas in the United States face increasing environmental pressures due to population growth and related development. Over half of the nation's population lives in coastal counties, though these areas only account for 17 percent of land in the U.S. Population growth and associated development lead to higher levels of solid waste production, more urban and suburban run-off, loss of green space and wildlife habitat, as well as less drinkable water supply.

Congress established the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) as part of the Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-77). This program, administered by NOAA, provides matching grants for the purchase of coastal property by state coastal management agencies and local governments. This program has spent around \$200 million supporting 150 projects between 2002 and 2007, protecting over 35,000 acres of land. Although CELCP has been reauthorized in subsequent appropriations bills, it risks cancellation without the formal statutory authorization provided in this bill.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that implementing H.R. 1907 “would cost \$240 million over the 2009-2013 period and \$60 million after 2013.” [Full CBO Cost Estimate](#)

STAFF CONTACT

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